

## Foreword

---



National  
Oceanic and  
Atmospheric  
Administration



U.S.  
DEPARTMENT  
OF  
COMMERCE

# NOAA Fisheries Service Northeast Cooperative Research Partners Program

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service), Northeast Cooperative Research Partners Program (NCRPP) was initiated in 1999. The goals of this program are to enhance the data upon which fishery management decisions are made as well as to improve communication and collaboration among commercial fishery participants, scientists and fishery managers. NOAA Fisheries Service works in close collaboration with the New England Fishery Management Council's Research Steering Committee to set research priorities to meet management information needs.

Fishery management is, by nature, a multiple year endeavor which requires a time series of fishery dependent and independent information. Additionally, there are needs for immediate short-term biological, oceanographic, social, economic and habitat information to help resolve fishery management issues. Thus, the program established two avenues to pursue cooperative research through longer and short-term projects. First, short-term research projects are funded annually through competitive contracts. Second, three longer-term collaborative research projects were developed. These projects include: 1) a pilot study fleet (fishery dependent data); 2) a pilot industry based survey (fishery independent data); and 3) groundfish tagging (stock structure, movements and mixing, and biological data).

First, a number of short-term research projects have been developed to work primarily on commercial fishing gear modifications, improve selectivity of catch on directed species, reduce bycatch, and study habitat reactions to mobile and fixed fishing gear.

Second, two cooperative research fleets have been established to collect detailed fishery dependent and independent information from commercial fishing vessels. The original concept, developed by the Canadians, referred to these as "sentinel fleets". In the New England groundfish setting it is more appropriate to consider two industry research fleets. A pilot industry-based survey fleet (fishery independent) and a pilot commercial study fleet (fishery dependent) have been developed.

Additionally, extensive tagging programs are being conducted on a number of groundfish species to collect information on migrations and movements of fish, identify localized or subregional stocks, and collect biological and demographic information on these species.

For further information on the Cooperative Research Partners Programs please contact:

National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service)  
Northeast Cooperative Research Partners Program

(978) 281-9276 – Northeast Regional Office of Cooperative Research  
(401) 782-3323 – Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Cooperative Research Office, Narragansett  
Laboratory

[www.nero.noaa.gov/StateFedOff/coopresearch/](http://www.nero.noaa.gov/StateFedOff/coopresearch/)

**Cooperative Research Partners Initiative  
Study Fleet Phase II Report  
for  
July 2004 to February 2005**



**Prepared by  
Perot Systems Government Services  
Mill Wharf Plaza, Suite 208  
Scituate, Massachusetts 02066  
[www.ps.net](http://www.ps.net)**

**perotsystems®**  
Government Services



## 1 Study Fleet Abstract

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), State, Federal and Constituent Programs Office (SFCP), Cooperative Research Program (CRP) has requested technical assistance in developing, coordinating and implementing their pilot Study Fleet Project. Under the CRP, NMFS has established a program of competitive grants and managed projects designed to increase collaboration between the fishing industry and fisheries scientists. The information collected through this program is aimed at improving fisheries science and fisheries management. The Study Fleets are intended to collect detailed fisheries-dependent information about catch, effort, by-catch, location, and possibly, to collect biological samples. The Study Fleet Project will continue to refine a number of methods for collecting more accurate and timely data from fishing vessels with the goal of improving data, opening new pathways of communication between industry and the scientific community and broadening our understanding of fishing and fisheries science.

The Cooperative Research Partners Initiative (CRPI) is the Northeast Region's cooperative fisheries research program. The Study Fleet Project is one of four major program areas of the CRPI. Three study fleets on Cape Cod, offshore George's Bank and the Gulf of Maine were chosen to work with state-of-the-art electronic data collection and communications systems to provide the CRPI with high resolution data on fisheries dependent catch, effort and biological sampling.

Perot Systems has been tasked by the CRPI to implement the Study Fleet Program. Perot Systems will approach the task with four major work areas; staffing, requirements analysis, information system development and fleet implementation. Task work will include Study Fleet contracting vessels, outreach and education; requirements and development of at-sea data collection and communications systems.